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TOLL

THE  
**SUMNER CONTROVERSY.**

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A  
SERIES OF ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN  
THE DAILY NEWS,  
RELATIVE TO THE LECTURE ON  
"HUMAN PROGRESS,"  
DELIVERED BEFORE THE  
MECHANICS' ASSOCIATION,

BY  
CHARLES SUMNER, ESQ.  
March 1, 1849.

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NEWPORT, R. I.

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CRANSTON & NORMAN,  
1849.

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## P R E F A C E .

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To those who have not read the *Daily News* during the last month, it will be necessary to say a few words in explanation of the following pages. On the evening of the first of March, 1849, Charles Sumner, Esq., of Boston, delivered a lecture on "The Law of Human Progress," before the Mechanics' Association of this town. In accordance with our usual custom, we spoke of the address in the *News*, a day or two afterwards, very briefly, dissenting from Mr. Sumner's views on some points, particularly in regard to the spirit of Conservatism in connection with Human Progress, as expounded and advocated by many gentlemen of the present day, who are styled "Reformers." We did not, however, anticipate at the time, that a controversy was to ensue; but if we had, it would have made no difference, as we simply spoke our opinion, as we do on all occasions, and in regard to all matters of a public nature.

In a few days after this, the controversy, as published in these pages, commenced. We regret the issue, but as we have said elsewhere, we could not prevent it. We now publish the communications in the order in which they appeared in the *News*, together with three editorial articles in their proper order.

We do this in consequence of the frequent demands which have been made, during the last few days, for the series, and our inability to supply the papers.

This will give all who desire it, an opportunity to read the correspondence, in a connected manner, and to judge of the merits of the matter originally at issue between the respective parties.

DAILY NEWS OFFICE,  
Newport, R. I., March 31, 1849. }



### **EDITORIAL NOTICE from the DAILY NEWS.**

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The thirteenth lecture before the Mechanics' Association was delivered on Thursday evening, by CHARLES SUMNER, Esq., of Boston, on the Law of Human Progress. We did not hear the commencement, but learn from those who did, that it was excellent. When we entered the house, Mr. Sumner was speaking of the prophecy of Descartes in relation to fire, steam, &c. He made frequent allusions to Condorcet and other French Philosophers. To the 18th century belonged the enunciation of this law, though promulgated in Judea by Jesus and his early disciples, eighteen hundred years ago. He was willing to accord to antiquity all that belonged to it, but he was opposed to the idea that all the civilization of art belonged to Greece and Rome,—such was not the case ; he said that the printing press was a higher gift to man than all antiquity. Conservatism, said Mr. Sumner, seeks to maintain things as they are—it is the bigotry of religion and politics. We must widely differ from this opinion of the learned gentleman. In this country, where Radacalism seems to be the order of the day, without a genuine Conservatism, our Republic would soon be undermined, and our institutions shattered. Hot-headed and violent abolitionists would at once liberate the slaves

of the South, without reflecting as to the consequences, or providing any means for their welfare, or throwing any safeguards around us, to protect us from these ignorant beings who would know no bounds and have no reason, when first permitted to feel that they were free.

Mr. Sumner hoped that we should not be like a certain river in Scotland which sometimes backed up with such force as to reverse the motion of the water-wheels upon it. We could not help thinking how much the people of this town are like that river,—they are constantly backing, and desire only to remain in the footsteps which their ancestors made. From Geological investigations, Mr. Sumner said that Dr. Lyell was satisfied that this world is more than one hundred thousand years old ; we have no doubt whatever of this, and are quite confident that this town is nearly of that age,—and from the antiquated notions of some of its citizens, we should suppose that they were a remnant of the population of that period.

The lecture evinced much research and learning, and was a brilliant affair, although too radical for those who have no sympathy with men who live so much in advance of their age,—yet they would respect Mr. Sumner as a man and appreciate him as a scholar. Mr. S. only referred to his notes occasionally, having the lecture committed to memory. The house was well filled.

## THE COMMUNICATIONS.

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NEWPORT, March 3d, 1849.

MR. EDITOR :—

I was very happy to-day, to read your very just remarks in the *News*, concerning the lecture delivered by Mr. Sumner.

Perhaps it is not attaching too much importance to the wild and extravagant notions of Mr. S. to say that the happiness and prosperity of the present generation would be not altogether unaffected by receiving a very large amount of his peculiar religious and political sentiments. We have no objection to the improvement and prosperity of a nation, either in the arts and sciences, or in politics and religion. We seek for the improvement of all of them, and we find it. Perhaps no nation, in modern times, has excelled us. Let the arts and sciences advance with all the speed we are capable of promoting. Let religion and politics do likewise. But let us be cautious what we term *progress* in the letter. In a nation governed by the people themselves, which is peculiarly the case with our own, will not its safety and even its existence much depend upon the manner of swaying the popular power? for what is more deadly to a State than anarchy—and how can anarchy be more easily created than by popular tumults? A republican government, in cases of alarming emergencies, must have its conservative institutions to protect it, or it falls; and indeed, the progress of political institutions, it may be apprehended, will ever be measured by the amount of stability and happiness they afford the government they are intended to support.

What has many times saved our government from the parricidal inflictions of the popular branch of the legislature, in which frenzy and madness have sometimes attained to a high pitch, but that grave and dignified assemblage of statesmen—the conservative Senate? what has even saved our little State from the madness of Dorrism and the consequent ensual of the crime of blood and carnage? What but a spirit of conservatism, in former days, set aside the conflicting interests and prejudices of the North and South, and united them into one harmonious whole, and thus constituted a noble and most powerful republic, unequalled for progress in the annals of history? What at this very time, is preserving the formidable republic, checks the fanaticism of abolitionists, and postpones the horrors of civil war between our brethren of the North and South? And, 'to speak of religion, is the nation not blessed with a great conservative force—the Church that holds a medium between the corruptions of Rome and the wild vagaries of sectarianism, checking Popish tyranny on the one hand, and headlong fanaticism on the other? A wholesome conservatism we conceive to be most intimately and necessarily connected with the law of human progress, particularly in the branches of politics and religion. The assertion that "conservatism is the bigotry of religion and politics," we hold to be an *impious blasphemy*; and this as well as other absurdities, uttered by Mr. S., we thought strange productions before an intelligent audience. He has the good fortune to be endowed with fine talents and good address, but this only renders his sophistry the more dangerous. We have no respect for these utopian philosophers. *Their* progress is well marked in past history, and a reflecting and intelligent people will avoid their doctrines, even at the expense of being considered "splendid barbarians. G.



MR. EDITOR :—Your paper does Mr. Sumner injustice. I have heard his lecture on the Law of Progress twice, and he expressly said each time that we needed both the conservative and the reformative elements in order to have a true progress; “conservatism,” said he, “of all that is right, reform of all that is wrong.” And yet a day or two since, you said you did not agree with him, because our country needs a conservative element to balance the radical element that is so rife. But wherein does this differ from Mr. Sumner’s views? Did he not illustrate his views by referring to the planetary system which is preserved by the equilibrium of the centrifugal and centripetal forces?

It seems to me that the true course, the course, at once of propriety and of policy is to recognize and welcome all that is good in those who differ from us, especially when they have so manly a spirit and temper as Mr. Sumner has. Surely such is the most effectual way of curing their faults, if they have any, and at all events of coming at the truth, and finding out what is really best for all parties.

As to the communication in your paper of this morning which charges Mr. S. with “impious blasphemy,” think neither yourself, Sir, nor any calm thinker in this community will deliberately sanction such a charge.

PAUL [1 Thess. V. 21.]

TO THE EDITOR :—

I was sorry to see an article in a late number of the *News*, signed “G.,” severely censuring the lecture of C. Sumner delivered before the Mechanics’ Association, both because I think a community should evince its gratitude to a man of cultivated mind and high literary attainments, who devotes a portion of his time to their instruc-

tion and amusement, by forbearing needless criticism ; and because, if taken as a just expression of public sentiment in Newport, which I cannot believe it is, it displays a state of society far behind the age in which we live. And hoping that the columns of the *News* are ever open to a fair hearing of both sides of any important subject introduced to its readers, I am induced to offer a few brief remarks upon the subject of said lecture. I am surprised that "G." should so warmly applaud the editorial remarks of the *News* on this subject, and then so unsparingly condemn the discourse,—for if I rightly understood the editor, he intended to praise it—"differing widely," however, from some of its views.

And when the editor remarks, "We could not help thinking how much the people of this town are like that river (which sometimes backed up with such force as to reverse the water wheels upon it) they are constantly backing and desire only to remain in the footsteps their ancestors made," &c., &c., is it not evident that such a people would not well receive a lecture which proclaimed the law of human progress, not as a glorious dream but as a present reality. As a native citizen of Newport, and one tenderly attached to its people, I feel at liberty to speak plainly of their peculiarities, and I cannot wonder while boasting of their greatest, if not only modern attraction, a strong and cunningly devised fortress, built by the National Government, that they should treat as Utopian any scheme for the establishment, in this century, of permanent and universal peace.

And perhaps as strong and as selfish motives might be adduced for the refusal by the people of the ancient metropolis, to acknowledge the fraternity of their sable brethren, or aid in their emancipation from slavery. But surely there is no greater evidence of human pro-

gress, and that we live in an advanced stage of it, then the recognition of this grand truth of human brotherhood, which though worldly philosophers and obdurate statesmen have been slow to admit it, was undoubtedly proclaimed by an eminent apostle before the refined Athenians, nearly 2000 years ago, when he said, "God hath made of one blood, all nations of men," &c.

The year so lately fled, will be consecrated as a memorable epoch in human progress, as the period when one of the most powerful nations of the earth, shaking off the fetters of monarchical government, adopted as its motto the expressive words "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity," the watchwords and the landmarks of man's advancement for many centuries ; for what but a sense of the inherent and unalienable right of all men to liberty, roused the English barons, in the thirteenth century, to demand the great charter of king John, and at a later stage of this progress, in 1776, our fathers declared boldly that men are not only born free, but oh, how rapid the step from this to the acknowledgement of the third and crowning truth—"All men are brothers."

Truly the signs of our times strongly betoken the near approach of that glorious day when "The kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the saints of the most high, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall fear and serve him." As to the assertion that "conservatism is the bigotry of religion and politics," I doubt not the lecturer referred to that ultra conservatism which would hold fast every thing, even the errors bequeathed to us by past ages. I have yet to learn that Christianity is the patron either of this or the other extreme, and perhaps the lecturer will smile when he remembers the outcry of a people formerly, "Lo they that

turn the world upside down are come hither also." Having had the privilege of hearing (I believe) the same discourse before an audience in Providence, I know not how any portion of it could be termed "impious blasphemy," breathing, as it did, the gospel spirit of love and good will to men, and exhorting all who labor for human improvement "to lay their puny hands in the parental hand of God."

In conclusion, I fervently desire that our beloved Newport, awaking from the slumber of past ages and casting off that self-esteem which prompts a people to vaunt themselves, as one of the *very few* enlightened communities, may cordially aid in forwarding the good work, which it is now too late for *them* to commence, remembering that they *only* who are wise "shall shine as the brightness of the firmament and as the stars forever and ever." T.

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NEWPORT, March 15, '49.

MR. EDITOR :—

My attention has been called to two articles in your paper, one over the signature of "Paul," and the other over that of "T," both of which strongly criticise an article of mine published in the same paper a short time ago, in relation to a certain portion of Mr. Sumner's lecture on the Law of Human Progress.

In writing that article, I had no intention to involve myself in a newspaper controversy, but my sole desire was to raise my feeble voice in the endeavor to frustrate a powerful effort to set aside the true and well acknowledged rule of conservatism, as a vital quality in the law of human progress, particularly in the branches of politics and religion. I assailed the lecturer on no other point, though he is equally vulnerable on many of the theories he advanced; but, unfortunately, for him, did not prove them.

"Paul's" sole argument is this: that the lecturer required for a true progress, both the conservative and re-formative elements, and that he illustrated his views by the planetary system. I admit that he made this allusion, and he is charged with no error in the statement of the *fact*. But I do charge him with error in its application; I charge him with improperly apportioning the centripetal and centrifugal forces, and that his theories would not thereby produce a moral equilibrium. He wants far too much of the centrifugal force in all his political and religious arrangements, and philosophically speaking, his planets, instead of revolving around the common centre in a re-entering curve, would become so eccentric as to describe parabolas and thus become comets. And indeed, were the people to submit to his school of philosophy, our present well-organized systems of government, both civil and religious, would fall into chaos. This was the meaning and substance of my argument, not one word of which can be disproved, and not one word of which can I retract. Thus much for "Paul."

From "T" I find myself lying under much censure.—He will, however, permit me to say that when an orator, famous for his talents and address, for his power of convincing, sees fit to deliver such subverting and disorganising doctrines before a Newport audience, I am one of its citizens who not only claims a right, but acknowledges it his duty, to raise his feeble voice against them. Simply because the gifted gentleman "has devoted a portion of his time to our *instruction* and amusement" does not, I am proud to say, swell my heart with so much "gratitude" as to compliment him for his maddened schemes of revolution, or for his new-fangled dogmas—unsusceptible of proof.

Standing simply upon the broad ground of the disor-

ganizing and revolutionary tendencies of the lecturer's doctrines, I have been replied to in copious quotations of scripture—arguments the most potent, it is true, when correctly applied, but when perverted from their true sense, are of much injury to the question, and weaken their efficacy in matters for which they were really intended. But of this hereafter.

I do not deny, but perfectly agree with "T," that revolutions have sometimes effected great changes for the better. The story of the wars of the English barons, and that of our own revolution of '76, I will, with avidity, seize upon, with him, as cases in point. I will not deny that revolutionary wars have sometimes caused the improvement and sometimes the salvation of States. I will not even deny that there is no government of any king, prince, or people now on earth, but has found its existence by the application of war. But what does all this prove? Why, simply that war is sometimes necessary—a conclusion, it may be recollected, diametrically opposite to one of the dogmas of the lecturer, and to the apparent notions of "T." But, on the other hand, what does it prove? It does not prove that certain individuals, ever eager for change, are always justifiable in disseminating doctrines that have no other tendency than to bring about a revolution and deluge their country in blood, when all probabilities go to show that changes so effected must be for the worse. Now that we are provided with a well organised government, one truly republican, fortified with all the checks and balances that constitute it a perfect system of wheel-work, whoever attacks the institutions on which it is dependent for its preservation and existence, must be looked upon with suspicion. It is notorious that some men in power, in all ages, have exceeded their authority. Kings and rulers have exceeded the power

granted them by their constitutions, which has resulted in the rightful consequence of revolution and war, and terminated with a change of government; and I doubt not but similar causes would produce similar effects in our own country. It is not even to be suspected but we should resist with all our might and strength any encroachment upon the instrument placed in the hands of our rulers for their guidance and our safety. Such would be justifiable revolution. But to attack, by means however insidious, institutions reared and supported by that instrument, ay, upon which its safety mostly depends, and to dissatisfy the people with their institutions by means of sophistical arguments, is what I term an unjustifiable tendency to revolutionize and to war. Does it require any argument to show that if our ships of war and fortifications were destroyed, we should become a prey to the cupidity of our neighbors? and that to abolish slavery by force, or by any underhanded means, would sever the cord which binds together the North and South, let loose upon our brethren of the South millions of blacks who would at once engage in the calamitous contest of a servile war, and produce an everlasting stigma upon the christian name? The philosophers of such a school let me admonish with the Holy Apostle Paul, "*Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers, for there is no power but of God, and the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resisteth shall receive to themselves damnation.*" And also with St. Peter, "*Submit yourself to every ordinance of men for the Lord's sake,*" &c

I would here remark that it is inconceivable how one can preach the doctrine of universal peace, and at the same time, and almost in the same argument, urge measures the most disorganising and revolutionary.

That "our townsmen have selfish motives for the refusal to acknowledge the fraternity of their sable brethren or to aid in the emancipation of slavery," as stated by "T," I for one do not believe. Those who have the power and good sense to withstand the temptations of Satan which they see conspicuously displayed around them, and violently preached under the guise of religious motives, I believe to act from a pure, disinterested, and exalted condition of the soul, to say nothing of the most favorable arguments they adduce from the word of God. Any tenet, Mr. Editor, however extravagant and lawless, may receive the color of truth by ingeniously quoting detached portions of Scripture independent of the context and the subject matter they are really intended to explain. And as "T" makes but one quotation to disprove the legality of slavery, it is presumed to be the best authority he can find. He quotes a passage from the well known sermon of St. Paul to the Athenians on the subject of their gross idolatry. "*God hath made of one blood all nations of men, to dwell on all the face of the earth, &c.*" Now the sole object of the Apostle in his sermon was to warn the Athenians against the gross idolatry into which they had fallen, and to teach them that salvation was to be secured only through repentance and the worship of the living God. The spirit and meaning of the quotation was to impress upon their minds the very important idea that they and all men were the offspring of God, and that therefore the Godhead was not likened to any of their images. It is such cant, sir, that does much harm to the cause of our blessed religion, and I would respectfully admonish "T" against the improper use of Scriptural phrases, as they are liable to mislead those who may not entertain sufficient interest to look into the truth of his assertions. But, Mr. Editor, what is the fact—the plain



incontrovertable fact? It is well known that slavery was a part of the civil constitution of most countries where christianity appeared and yet there cannot be found a single passage in the New Testament by which it is condemned or prohibited! But we do find that a servant had run away from his master and sought refuge with St. Paul, who, instead of assisting the servant to recover his liberty, thought it his duty to send him back to his master. It therefore appears that the Holy Apostle not only recognised the legality of slavery but considered it his solemn duty to protect its institutions and even the rights of the master, for he felt much concern lest he should be a loser for the time he had lost, and sends him word that "if he hath wronged thee or owed thee aught, put that on mine account." Behold here a true spirit of Christianity—a most exemplary act of the Holy Apostle, breathing the pure spirit of his divine master. We find here none of those sickly sentiments of "equal rights" which in these days are found in every man's mouth—and which say everything and mean nothing,—no endeavor to subvert the established order of government—but rather to protect and defend the institutions of his country. A fine theme this, for the apostles of abolition who so cunningly seize upon the servants of our southern friends whenever they appear in some of our free States, who so deliberately violate one of the articles of our beloved constitution, and shame themselves, besides, with the guilt of an ungrateful violation of the laws of hospitality. To those who are guilty of intruding upon the rights of our southern brethren, whether in word or deed, permit me to say, look well to your constitution—the bulwark of your well-formed government. Not only consider it a delicate matter to tamper with the rights of others, but frequently reflect upon the tenth commandment "*Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's servant, &c.*"

I should rather not have touched again upon these subjects. My former article I thought sufficiently explicit for all the purposes intended. But severe criticism has forced me into this rejoinder. I anxiously look forward to that time when all wars shall cease, when slavery shall be abandoned, when all men shall be as free and equal as circumstances will permit, when indeed the milennial glory shall appear. But reflection and experience teach me that the time is not yet ; that to preserve a state of comparative happiness and good government among all nations, men must be taken as we find them, and our institutions controlled accordingly. If for the good of the whole war is necessary, we must pursue it. If the institution of slavery is thought to be necessary by those who have the sole right to judge of their own interests and responsibilities, I say let it alone, and let it wear itself by time and the operations of those who are alone responsible for it.

I have been taken to task, by my criticisers, for charging the lecturer with impious blasphemy for uttering the assertion that "conservatism is the bigotry of religion and politics." I have shown conclusively that a wholesome conservatism is absolutely necessary for the stability of a good government, whether civil or religious. I have shown that the studied sneer he has given to the character of conservatism renders his doctrines disorganising and revolutionary. I have shown that his doctrine of universal peace is swallowed up in his totally opposite one of revolution and war, and that it is therefore dangerous and deceitful beyond measure. I have shown that the supporters of conservatism in religion and politics are neither "bigots" nor "splendid barbarians," but that they are men devoted to the will of God, to the preservation of his sacred and civil institutions. I have, there-

fore, shown that the famous assertion is the expression of evil, yea more than evil, against our wise and incomparable institutions, and that it is therefore a blasphemy in its broadest sense—but not doubting that our civil and religious institutions are established and guarded by an Omniscient Hand, I hold that all utopian theories intended to overturn the ordinances of God are impious. I have therefore said, and I say again, that the assertion “conservatism is the bigotry of religion and politics” is an *impious blasphemy*.  
G.

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MR. EDITOR:—

Leaving it for “T” to discuss with him the matters of war and slavery, &c., simply remarking, in regard to the “balance of the centripetal and centrifugal forces,” that one would hardly suspect that the danger *here* was of an excessive tendency to *fly off* into philanthropic abstractionism, but rather the reverse—leaving this topic, I wish to say one word upon that point or aspect of “G’s” communication which was what I before solely alluded to and which he persists in justifying. I refer to the charge of “impious blasphemy” against Mr. Sumner for pronouncing “conservatism,” (that is, as he afterwards explains it) to be the “bigotry of religion and politics.” I insist that it is unfair to separate a sentence from its whole connexion, and then attach to a word in it a sense which the speaker did not intend and only a few sentences after, showed that he did not. This is doing just what “G” accuses certain ones of doing with Scripture. Mr. Sumner went on to distinguish between a “wholesome conservatism” and another kind, in such a way as to show irresistibly that he meant by a *bigoted* conservatism that spirit which hugs and clings to what is bad as well as what is good from weak, worldly or wicked

motives. Mr. Sumner may differ from "G" in his application of the definition, he may draw the line between the pernicious conservatism erroneously (and so *may* "G," unless, he is infallible) but because he believes a man in error, has he a right to come out and charge him with *impiety* and *blasphemy*! One would think *absurdity* was enough to burden a man with for once.

Mr. Editor, I protest and I believe every reflecting man in this community will join me in so doing, against the style and (apparent) spirit of such an article as the former one of "G." Talk about dangerous doctrines,—to my mind that mode of treating those who differ from us, when they come out in a manly way, is far more dangerous than any radicalism of such men as Mr. Sumner. The evils of radicalism are to be charged in no small proportion upon the manner in which men have been denounced for the crime of thinking for themselves and saying what they think.

I am not called upon to go into a controversy with "G" on the various topics which "T" has started. I should like to see them discussed calmly and candidly, but not if it were done in the style of "G's" first piece. If Slavery and War can be defended by God's word as written on the human heart and as written in Scripture and interpreted by reason, for one I should be glad to see it done, for two reasons,—first, because God's word is truth and truth is the best thing for man,—and secondly, because it would relieve my opinion of the human race as its character has been exhibited for some ages. But this I leave here, having meant from the beginning only to assert Mr. Sumner's claim as a lecturer and a man to a manly, gentlemanly, decent treatment.

PAUL (2 Cor. XIII. 8.)

Newport, March 20, 1849.

MR. EDITOR :—

So far as "Paul" is concerned I leave the argument—not denying him the least advantage he may have gained from his article in to-day's paper.

But with regard to my rights and responsibilities, I have a word to say. His loud 'protest' against my style and spirit (*apparent* spirit if you please) and his appeals to the sympathies of the community to join him, do not alarm me in the least. The writer of this is fully aware of his rights, and no such jargon will ever deter him from assuming them.

The last clause of his article savors of personality. If he means to convey to the public an idea that I have treated the lecturer in an ungentlemanly, unmanly, or indecent manner—which it very strongly implies, I totally deny the truth of such an insinuation, and fling it back to him accordingly.

The writer wishes to be moderate—but he permits no such personalities on any account whatever.

The writer holds himself responsible for every word he has uttered in this controversy.

G.

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MR. EDITOR :—

It seems strange that a writer should complain of personality who brings anonymously the charge of *impious blasphemy* against a public speaker of high moral character, and for what? why, for asserting that conservatism, as opposed to progress, is bigotry in religion or in politics. I have argued that this was Mr. Sumner's plain meaning and "G" has not disproved, (I think, not denied) that it was. I would remind "G" that the whole drift of the close of the lecture was to urge upon Reform-

ers patience, caution, trust in God's providence and the law of progress. This has been repeatedly and emphatically acknowledged to me by persons who differed from Mr. S.'s position. And now in view of this, I repeat, it still seems to me that "G."s charge of *impious blasphemy* is uncharitable, therefore unchristian, therefore unmanly and ungentlemanly—for if "G" believes in the Christian standard (as his first article implies) then he must agree with me that there can be no true manliness nor gentlemanliness which violates *that*. I shall not insist upon the redundancy of the phrase *impious blasphemy*, (for if a thing is blasphemous that includes impiety)—nor shall I dwell on the irrelevancy of calling it blasphemy to censure *human* institutions,—I confine myself to the moral and religious wrongfulness of such charges, which I am sorry "G" does not see.

"G" calls it "jargon" to protest and appeal to thinking men against picking out a sentence from a lecture marked, as a whole, by a manly and moderate tone and denouncing it as blasphemy. I should really like to see his Dictionary.

In fine, I shall certainly not deny "G's" *right* (legally) to say what he chooses, and I should be the last man to expect or wish to *scare* an anonymous opponent into agreement with me, therefore his last article was quite uncalled for. I am not anxious to have the last word, but I *am* anxious to have those things prevail which are mentioned by

PAUL (Philip, 4. 8.)

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Editorial article from the *Daily News*.

We deeply regret, as we think our readers also must, that the controversy which has been carried on for some time past, in our columns, on Mr. Sumner's lecture, has assumed its present personal cast. As we had alluded to

the lecture, ourselves, and as a public journalist of the day, we could not withhold the use of our columns, as a medium through which the argument could be carried on; and we supposed that the respective parties would confine themselves strictly to the record, as we should say in law, and not digress into matters foreign to the controversy. But they have forgotten the gist of the argument, and entirely lost sight of the subject matter of their controversy, by making it, as it now is, entirely a personal affair. The writers of the articles are all gentlemen of the highest standing, and we cannot but again regret that they should have so far lost sight of their object, as to have merged the whole subject into personalities.

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Newport, March 23, '49.

MR. EDITOR :—

In my last I stated that I had done with "Paul" so far as the argument is concerned. I fully adhere to everything I have said, and conceive that he has not disproved a single thing.

I have nothing to say here of the obvious difference between attacking a man's doctrine and attacking a man's private character, presuming it to be evident to all.

I have no argument to make here about the relation which your correspondent asserts exists between a gentleman, a man, and a christian.

After my declaration of yesterday, your correspondent persists in accusing me of *unmanly* and *ungentlemanly* conduct,—I therefore denounce him as a *liar*, and destitute of the proper attributes of a gentleman. G.

Editorial article from the *Daily News*, at the conclusion of the controversy.

Our readers are all aware that a controversy has been carried on in our columns, during the last three weeks, relative to the lecture delivered before the Mechanics' Association, on the first of March, by Charles Sumner, Esq., of Boston. As this controversy has caused a great deal of excitement in the community, and been the theme of much remark, and as we have allowed our correspondents the use of our columns to express their views on the matter, to their own extent, and since the matter has been brought to an abrupt and unpleasant termination,—we have a few words to say to the public, on the subject. After Mr. Sumner's lecture was delivered, we gave a passing notice of it, not as full, however, as we desired, or as we had given of nearly all the other lectures; and the reason of this was that we had not time, then, to write a more extended notice.

A correspondent under the signature of "G," immediately sent us an article on the subject, which was replied to by another under the signature of "Paul," and a third under that of "T." As a matter of course, we cheerfully gave place to these articles, knowing, as we did, that they were written by gentlemen of the highest standing, all of whom were fully competent to carry on an interesting argument on the subject.

When "G" handed us his first article, he stated explicitly that we were at liberty to give his name as the author of the articles which he might write, at any time, when demanded of us by any one who had a right so to do, or whenever we might think it necessary,—also avowing that he simply wished to reply to some of the sentiments of Mr. Sumner's lecture, which he considered exceedingly objectionable,—and saying that as far as mere



idle curiosity and common gossip were concerned, the authorship of his articles was a matter of no importance. We make this statement, as a disinterested party, in justice to "G," because we have heard it said that he was carrying on an anonymous controversy, and did not wish to have his name known as the author of the articles ; he has also repeatedly authorized us to give his name, as above stated, since that time. Similar requests of secrecy were made of us, by the other two correspondents, when their first articles were handed in, and for similar reasons we presume,—although the injunction was soon removed, by one of them.

As we stated, some days ago, no man could regret more than ourselves that the controversy was rapidly assuming a personal aspect ; but still, we had no control over the parties, and could not fairly refuse the admission of their articles. We make these remarks somewhat in justice to ourselves, because we hear that some few have said that we ought not to have commented on Mr. Sumner's lecture, unless we approved of it, and could consistently speak favorably of all the sentiments which he advanced ; and also that we ought not to have opened our columns for the controversy. Now we have a few words to say on these two points, and we mean to be distinctly and unmistakably understood by every reader. In the first place, as the editor of a public journal, a chronicler of the doings of the day, an observer of the transactions of men, &c., we claim it as our right, and one which we shall always boldly and honestly exercise, to express our opinion, be it what it may, on all the topics of a public nature which may arise, of every kind and description, which we conceive to be interesting to our readers. We intend always to be gentlemanly and impartial in the discharge of this duty ; to praise no man, no measure and no thing

merely from personal considerations, and to oppose or censure none and nothing, simply from an individual dislike or a private prejudice.

During the Course of Lectures this winter, we have given fair and impartial notices of them, such as we have heard, to the extent that our time and limits would permit. If any of the gentlemen advanced sentiments which were not consonant with our views of the subjects of which they treated, we hesitated not to express our difference of opinion, and to give our reasons therefore. We accorded to Mr. Sumner high and unexceptionable character, brilliant talents and rare scholarship,—but we as promptly expressed our objection to some of his progressive notions, particularly in regard to his views of conservatism. We hold to the doctrine that a strong conservatism, particularly in this progressive age, when the Socialism of French and German philosophers, and their less powerful imitators this side of the water, is so rife, and we say so dangerous to society, and so destructive to the ancient and hallowed institutions of the earth,—is of vital importance to maintain the just gravity of a healthy and moral atmosphere. And was it not for the strong conservators of the day, all our ancient land-marks, all our most valued principles, both civil and religious, ay, and the very morality of society (and we speak now in its broadest sense) would be subverted by the Agrarian vagaries and reformatory fancies of those whose brains are whirling like splendid comets, without a guiding principle or a motive power for positive good. These Reformers, so called, would strike the axe to the root of what they conceive to be momentous evils, while the effect of the blow would palsy the arm that struck it, and the concussion would produce chaotic confusion, from which it would require a more than human wisdom to extricate us.

A single word now as to our responsibility, as some may call it, in the controversy about which we have spoken. It is true that an editor has the entire control of his paper, and may at any and all times refuse admission to such articles as he pleases; but it would not be fair or honorable for him to do so. A paper is published for the public good, and persons expect the privilege of expressing their views upon such matters, of a public nature, as may directly interest them, through its columns. We adhere to this rule, and we always shall. After this controversy was commenced, it was for the gentlemen themselves to end it whenever they felt disposed,—and not for us to interpose a barrier against them, thus offending one or the other, and refusing to give either a fair chance to reply to his opponent. Again we say, we deeply regret the issue, but we could not have prevented it, and still sustained our true position as an editor, and our comity as a gentleman.

In conclusion, if any suppose that we shall ever shrink from the expression of an honest opinion because it may be in opposition to others, or that we shall be uncourteous, because the consequences may otherwise be unpleasant,—they strangely and widely misunderstand our character as an editor and a man.